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ABSTRACT

This guide booklet helps parents teach their children about healthy nutrition at home. It is part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Team Nutrition, which is designed to improve the health and education of children and which actively involves children and their families in nutrition education activities in the school, community, and home. The 16 sections include activities entitled: "What is a Healthy Diet?"; "Building Healthy Meals and Snacks"; "What Do You Know About Food?"; "What Counts as a Serving?"; "What is a Serving?"; "Supermarket Sleuths" (how to grocery shop wisely); "Learning About Food Groups"; "Roots, Stems, Leaves, Fruits, Flowers, or Seeds"; "Eat More Vegetables and Fruits"; "Super Good-for-You Snacks"; "Snacking is Fun and Nutritious"; "Food Gives Us Energy to Move!"; "Keep a Healthy Weight"; "Sensory Fun With Food"; "The Wonderful World of Food"; and "Rainy Day Food Fun". Ten tips describe how to use the Dietary Guidelines at home. (SM)

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ED 418 956

Team Up at Home

Team Nutrition Activity Booklet

Fun Nutrition Activities *for the* Family

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SP037922

Dear Family,

In June 1995 the United States Department of Agriculture instituted a new policy, the School Meals Initiative for Healthy Children, to assure that all school meals meet the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. Couple that with the fact that families are taking steps to serve healthier meals at home, and it means that children across the country are eating meals that are more nutritious and better tasting than ever before.

To help support the implementation of the School Meals Initiative for Healthy Children, the USDA created Team Nutrition, charged with the mission of improving the health and education of children. Team Nutrition actively involves children and their families in nutrition education activities in the classroom, cafeteria, community, and at home. Team Nutrition helps children:

- expand the variety of foods in their diets;
- add more fruits, vegetables and grains to the foods they already eat; and
- construct a diet lower in fat.

It's important not only to give children healthful food, but also to involve them in experiences that will encourage them to make food choices for a healthy diet, and to teach them the relationship between good-tasting, nutritious foods and good health.

That's exactly what's happening in thousands of Team Nutrition Schools nationwide, and everybody has a part to play. Teachers, school food service staff, parents and community organizations are teaming up to educate students through hands on nutrition education activities. School food service staff are receiving training, recipes, and resource materials to help them serve school meals that are nutritious and appealing. Team Nutrition Supporters and community volunteers are planning fun and entertaining nutrition education activities in the classroom and the cafeteria. And students are bringing materials like this activity booklet home, to link in-school learning with nutrition education activities for the whole family.

You too can take an active role in helping children develop good habits for better health:

- find out if your child's school is a Team Nutrition School and let your child's principal and food service staff know that you support these healthful changes;
- work with the parent organization at your child's school to make healthy meals and physical activity a school-wide priority; and
- use this Team Nutrition activity booklet to reinforce, at home, the nutrition education messages your child is receiving in school.

Children form their eating habits early. By helping them learn to eat well now and engage in regular physical activity, we not only help them grow up strong and healthy, but we help keep them healthy for their entire lives.

Welcome to the Team!

What is a Healthy Diet?

What Are Children Eating Today?

- 35% of elementary school-age children eat no fruit, and 20% eat no vegetables on a given day.
- 27% of children 6–11 years old are considered obese.
- 12% of school-age children report that they skip breakfast.

The following Dietary Guidelines for Americans age 2 years and older were developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to provide the best, most up-to-date advice from nutrition scientists.

- **Eat a variety of foods** to get the energy, other nutrients and fiber you need for good health.
- **Balance the food you eat with physical activity; maintain or improve your weight** to reduce your chances of having high blood pressure, heart disease, a stroke, certain cancers, and the most common kind of diabetes.
- **Choose a diet with plenty of grain products, vegetables, and fruits,** which are important sources of fiber, complex carbohydrates, and other food components that can help reduce your risk of developing some chronic diseases.
- **Choose a diet low in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol** to reduce your risk of heart disease and certain cancers, and to help you maintain a healthy weight.
- **Choose a diet moderate in sugars.** A diet with lots of sugars has too many calories and too few nutrients for most people and can contribute to tooth decay and overweight.
- **Choose a diet moderate in salt and sodium.** This may help reduce the risk of high blood pressure in some people.

The following guideline on alcohol does not apply to children and adolescents. Children and adolescents should not drink alcoholic beverages.

- **If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation,** because alcoholic beverages supply calories but little or no nutrients, and in excess are related to liver disease and some forms of cancer.

Unfortunately, most children do not consume a diet that meets the Dietary Guidelines outlined above. Fewer than one in five children eat the recommended amount of servings of vegetables and fruit daily. Team Nutrition needs you to join in and help kids make food choices for a healthy diet.

Thanks for joining Team Nutrition.

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Building Healthy Meals & Snacks

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Guide Pyramid is a guide you and your family can use to assess your eating habits. It presents guidelines for choosing foods that provide the right balance of vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients. With your child, you can create tasty menus that meet the goals you set based on the pyramid.

■ **Remember!** The calorie needs of young children vary. Each day, your child should be eating the lower-to-middle number of servings suggested on the Food Guide Pyramid for each of the five major food groups.

KEY

- • Fat (naturally occurring and added)
- ▼ Sugars (added)

These symbols show fat and added sugars in foods.

Food Guide Pyramid: A Guide to Daily Food Choices

Fats, Oils, and Sweets (use sparingly)
Milk, Yogurt, and Cheese Group 2 to 3 servings
Meat, Poultry, Fish, Dry Beans, Eggs and Nuts Group 2 to 3 servings
Vegetable Group 3 to 5 servings
Fruit Group 2 to 4 servings
Bread, Cereal, Rice, and Pasta Group 6 to 11 servings

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What Do You Know About Food?

TEAM NUTRITION • USDA

1. Circle the foods that are grains.

2. Circle the foods that are fruits.

3. Now draw a square around the foods above that are vegetables.

4. Which of these food groups should you eat the most of?

Grain Group

Milk Group

Vegetable Group

Fruit Group

Meat Group

See page 17 for answers

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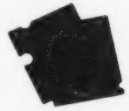
What Counts As A Serving?

Here are some examples of what counts as a serving in each food group. Use measuring cups and spoons to see how big each serving is.

Preschool children need the same variety of food as other family members, but may eat smaller servings.

Milk Group

- 1 cup of milk
- 2 ounces of process cheese
- 1 cup of yogurt
- 1 1/2 ounces of natural cheese



Grain Group

- 1 slice of bread
- 1/2 cup of cooked cereal, rice, or pasta
- 1 ounce of ready-to-eat cereal

Meat Group

- 2-3 ounces of cooked lean meat, poultry or fish (about the size of an audio cassette)
- 1/2 cup of cooked dry beans, or 1 egg counts as 1 ounce of lean meat. 2 tablespoons of peanut butter count as 1 ounce of meat

Vegetable Group

- 1/2 cup of cooked or chopped raw vegetables
- 3/4 cup of vegetable juice
- 1 cup of raw leafy vegetables

Fruit Group

- 1 medium apple, banana, or orange
- 3/4 cup of fruit juice
- 1/2 cup of chopped, cooked, or canned fruit

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What Is a Serving?

What counts as a serving? Unscramble the words to find out!

Bread group

1 slice of (raëbd) ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

1 ounce of ready-to-eat (rlacee) ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

1/2 cup cooked (rlacee, ceri, and stapa) ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___, ___ ___ ___ ___, and ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

Vegetable group

1 cup of raw leafy (gelbaveets) ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

1/2 cup of other vegetables, cooked or chopped raw

3/4 cup of vegetable (cijue) ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

Fruit group

1 medium (palep) ___ ___ ___ ___ ___, (annaba) ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___, (ganore) ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

1/2 cup of chopped, cooked, or canned (rufit) ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

3/4 cup (tuirf) ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ juice

Milk group

1 cup of milk or (guyort) ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

1-1/2 ounces of natural (shecee) ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ or 2 ounces of process cheese

Meat group

2 - 3 ounces of cooked lean meat, (yrulpot) ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___, or (fhsi) ___ ___ ___ ___

1/2 cup of cooked dry (neasb) ___ ___ ___ ___ ___, or 1 egg count as one ounce of lean meat. 2 tablespoons of

(tunape tebtur) ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ counts as 1 ounce of meat

See page 17 for answers

Supermarket Sleuths

Food-shopping trips can be a chance for discovery and learning for your child. These five tips will show you how:

Write your shopping list together at home.

This can help your child learn about different kinds of foods and how foods are grouped. As you prepare your list, refer to the Food Guide Pyramid with your child, then try to organize it by food groups. First, write down all the breads, cereals, rice, and pasta you need, including flour; then the fruits and vegetables; then the milk, cheese, yogurt, and other dairy products; then the meat, poultry, fish, eggs, dry beans, and nuts. Finish with whatever else you need. Read the list back to your child, and talk about which foods belong together in the same group.

Let your child choose one or two new foods for the family to try.

Invite your child to choose at least one new food during the shopping trip. It could be a new kind of fruit (such as a mango or papaya), a vegetable your child hasn't tried before (such as kale or okra), a new flavor of cheese, a type of dry bean you can use for soup or salad, an interestingly shaped pasta, or a different kind of bread. Decide on this new food at home or wait to see what you find at the store. Giving your child this important job can help him or her focus on low-fat snacks.

Make the shopping trip a discovery experience.

It's not always possible to choose the ideal time to shop, but you and your child will get more out of the experience if you're not feeling rushed, and your child is not tired, or hungry. Browsing through the store encourages your child to discover the wonderful variety of foods that are grown or produced in this country and around the world.

Talk about how the foods are organized:

- fruits
- vegetables
- grains
- meats
- dairy products

Refer to the Food Guide Pyramid and note the different forms foods in each group can take. Vegetables are available fresh, in cans, frozen, or as ingredients in soup. Talk about the different kinds of milk and milk products, such as cheese, cottage cheese, and yogurt. Compare types of pasta, rice, and dry beans. Name the different kinds of meats. Count the variety of breads your child can find.

After your shopping trip, unpack the groceries together.

Help your child identify each item and which foods — fruits, vegetables, and grain products — the family should eat the most of every day. Let your child help sort out foods that need refrigeration.

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Learning About Food Groups

Figure out the foods. Then in the space provided, write which food group each is from.

+

=
_____ = _____
Food Food Group

+

=
_____ = _____
Food Food Group

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_____ = _____
Food Food Group

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Food Food Group

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Food Food Group

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_____ = _____
Food Food Group

+
"eee"
=
_____ = _____
Food Food Group

See page 17 for answers

Roots, Stems, Leaves, Fruits, Flowers, or Seeds

Use these activities to teach your child about the different plant parts we eat. As a precaution, remind your child to never taste other kinds of plants without checking with an adult first.

Find the Plant Parts

The next time you're at the market with your child and have some extra time, look for foods we eat that are examples of roots, stems, leaves, fruits, flowers, and seeds. For instance:

Roots: Carrots, potatoes, turnips, beets, parsnips, radishes. If possible, look for examples with leafy tops, but remind your child that the part we usually eat grows underground.

Stems: Celery and asparagus.

Leaves: All kinds of lettuce, spinach, cabbage, kale, and parsley.

Fruits: A fruit is any seed-bearing food on a plant. Tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, and squash, for example, are actually fruits. Apples, oranges, pears, plums, cherries, mangoes, and other fruits each contain seeds or pits.

Flowers: Broccoli and cauliflower.

Seeds: Corn and peas, dry beans, rice, barley, oats, and nuts (including coconuts).

- As your child identifies different foods, talk about how each one looks like a leaf, stem, and so on.

Tossed and Turned

Making salads from different plant parts is a great way to teach children about food variety. For example, you might buy radishes (roots), spinach (leaves), celery (stems), broccoli (flowers), tomatoes (fruits), and fresh or frozen peas or sesame seeds (seeds).

- **Back at home,** set out the ingredients and examine them together.
- Talk about how the root vegetables grow underground, just like the roots of a plant.
- Compare the celery and spinach with the stem and leaves of a house plant or flowers outdoors.
- Cut open the tomato to see the seeds inside.
- Look closely at the broccoli florets. Point out that each one is a bud, like a flower waiting to open.
- If you have fresh peas, show your child how to take the peas out of the shell. Cut open a pea and point out the little plant from which new pea plants would grow.
- **Invite your child to help** wash the salad ingredients and shell the remaining pea pods. When you serve the salad, ask your child to tell other family members about the plant parts they're eating.

More Seeds, Please

Set aside a few beans from a package of dry beans, and soak the rest overnight. Then cut open a soaked bean to show your child what's inside these seeds we eat. (Lima beans are a good choice because they're larger, so it's easier to see the tiny plant inside.) Try planting the unsoaked beans outdoors in a pot.

- **After your bean investigations,** cook the soaked beans, adding your favorite flavorings. Invite your child to sample these tasty "seeds."

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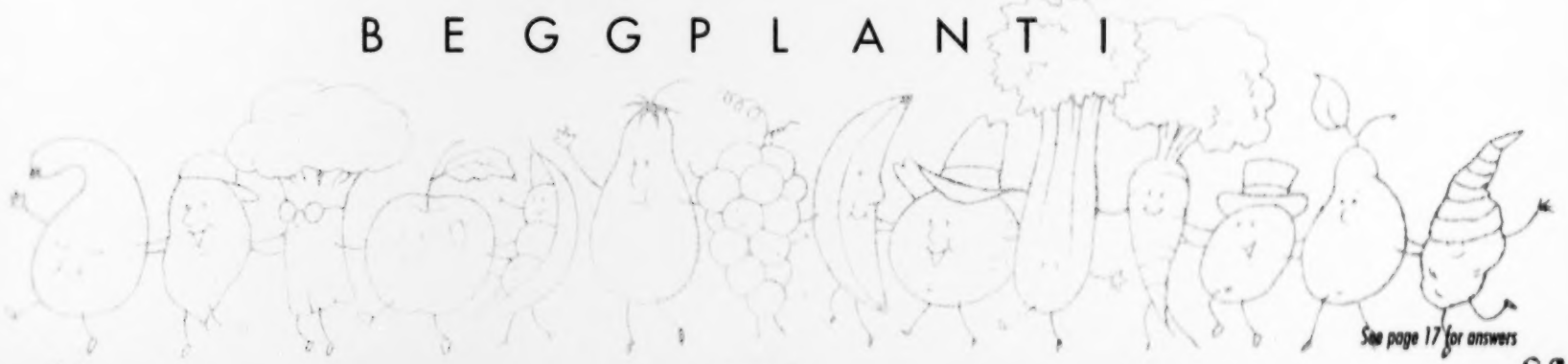
Eat More Vegetables and Fruits

Vegetables and fruits are delicious and nutritious. Many are rich in vitamins and minerals. Most are naturally low in fat and are good sources of fiber. Can you find these 14 hidden fruits and vegetables?

Find: squash, apple, yams, orange, celery, banana, broccoli, pear, peas, grapes, eggplant, kiwi, carrots, and prunes. The words can read up, down, or across from left to right or right to left!

B	F	S	E	S	E	N	U	R	P
R	C	Q	L	S	R	P	E	A	R
O	H	U	P	B	A	N	A	N	A
C	P	A	P	Y	R	E	L	E	C
C	S	S	A	Y	A	M	S	T	E
O	A	H	E	G	N	A	R	O	K
L	E	C	A	R	R	O	T	S	I
I	P	G	R	A	P	E	S	K	W
B	E	G	G	P	L	A	N	T	I



See page 17 for answers

Super Good-for-You Snacks

How can you get your child to eat lowfat snacks? These easy-to-make recipes are a great place to start! Invite your child to help you prepare them, too. Cooking is an excellent way to introduce young children to math skills such as measuring, and science concepts such as how heat and cold change substances. And cooking offers you and your child a chance to enjoy a project together. Remember to wash hands and review kitchen safety rules before you begin.

Mexican Snack Pizzas

A lowfat, low-calorie pizza with a Mexican flavor. The beans and whole-wheat muffins give a fiber boost.

- whole-wheat English muffins
- ¼ cup tomato puree
- ¼ cup canned kidney beans, drained and chopped
- 1 tablespoon onion, chopped
- 1 tablespoon green pepper, chopped
- ½ teaspoon oregano leaves
- ¼ cup mozzarella cheese, part skim milk, shredded
- ¼ cup lettuce, shredded

4 servings

Per pizza:
(½ English muffin):
Calories 95
Total fat 2 grams

1. Split muffins; toast lightly.
2. Mix puree, beans, onion, green pepper, and oregano. Spread on muffin halves. Sprinkle with cheese.
3. Broil until cheese is bubbly (about 2 minutes).
4. Garnish with shredded lettuce.

Chili Popcorn

Prepare the popcorn in a microwave oven or hot air popper. The small amount of fat added to the popcorn is just enough to make the other seasonings stick to the popped kernels.

- 1 quart popcorn, popped
- 1 tablespoon margarine, melted
- 1¼ teaspoons chili powder
- ¼ teaspoon ground cumin
- dash garlic powder

4 servings, 1 cup each

Per serving:
Calories 50
Total fat 3 grams

1. Mix hot popcorn and margarine.
2. Mix seasonings thoroughly; sprinkle over popcorn. Mix well.
3. Serve immediately.

Fruit-Juice Cubes

Are you looking for an afternoon snack that is cool, refreshing, and different? Both children and adults will enjoy these bite-size fruit-juice cubes. They are a good replacement for sugary drinks, which supply almost no vitamins or minerals.

- 1½ tablespoons (1½ envelopes) unflavored gelatin
- ¾ cup water
- 6-ounce can frozen grape or apple juice concentrate

45 cubes

Per cube:
Calories 10
Total fat Trace

1. Very lightly grease 9- by 5-inch loaf pan or plastic ice-cube trays.
2. Soften gelatin in water in a saucepan for 5 minutes.
3. Heat over low heat, stirring constantly, until gelatin dissolves. Remove from heat.
4. Add fruit-juice concentrate; mix well. Pour into loaf pan or ice-cube trays.
5. Cover and refrigerate. Chill until set.
6. Cut into 1-inch cubes and serve.

Other snack ideas

When your child wants something:

- Juicy: fruits
- Crispy: pumpkin seeds, carrot sticks, cucumber strips, toast, cereal mixed with nuts
- For warmth: soups, cider, or herbal tea
- For thirst: vegetable juices or fruit and yogurt shakes

Foods that are round, hard, small, thick and sticky, smooth, or slippery should not be offered to children under 4 years of age because of the risk of choking. Examples of such foods include hot dogs, whole grapes, seeds, nuts, popcorn, large pieces of raw carrot, and spoonfuls of peanut butter.

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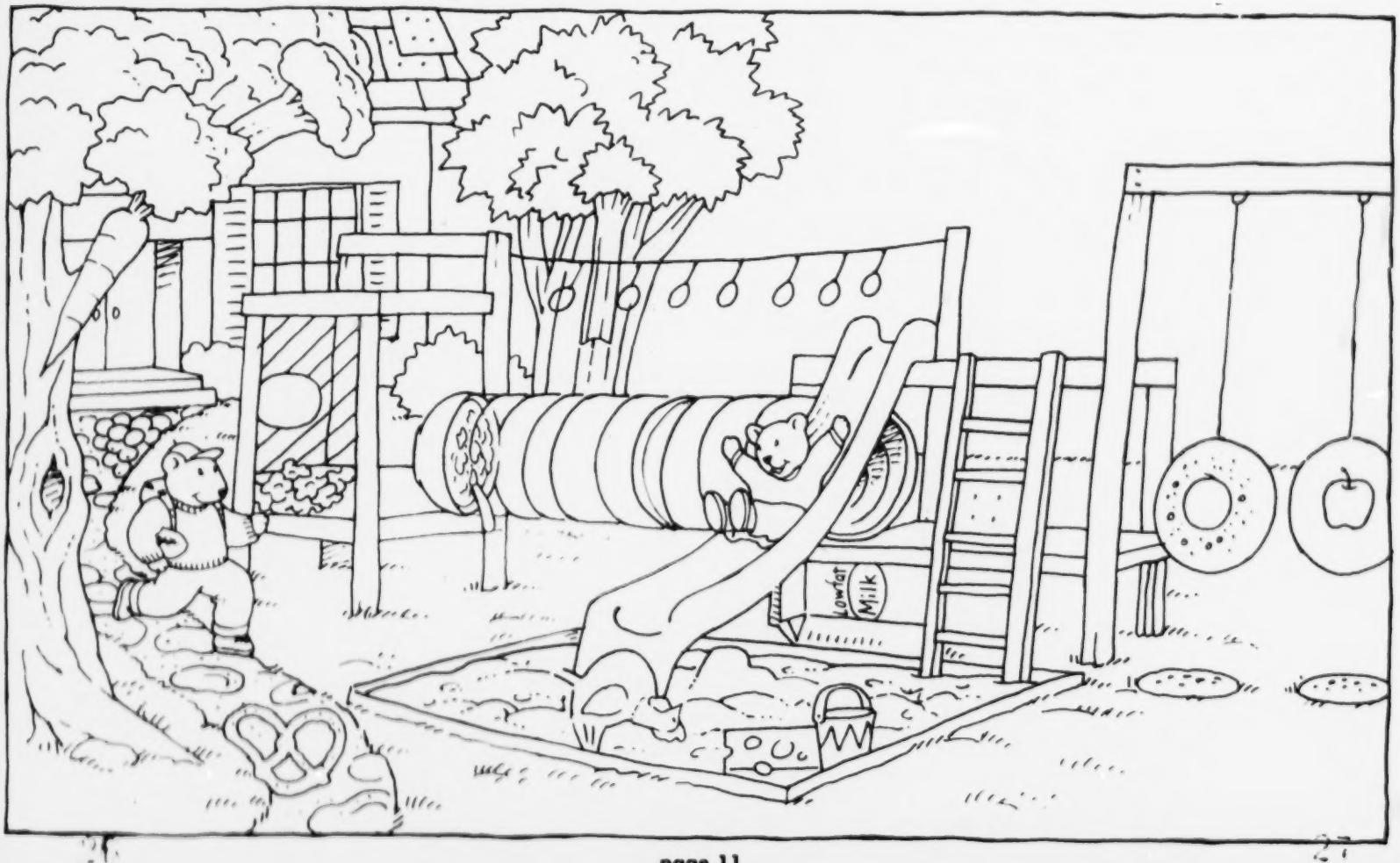
Snacking Is Fun and Nutritious

Find the low-fat snacks hidden in this picture. Find: graham cracker, lowfat cheese, lowfat milk, pretzels, bagels, lowfat cracker, string cheese, chicken, apple, banana, grapes, orange, carrot, celery, broccoli, cereal, lowfat cookies, unbuttered popcorn.



Food Gives Us Energy to Move!

Along with making food choices for a healthy diet, your child should learn that to have a strong body, he or she needs to do plenty of physical activities.

You can reinforce the tie between eating, energy, exercise, and good health with these movement activities for all ages.

Outdoor Fitness Fun

You know that children love to be outside, and doing an activity with you in the great outdoors makes the experience even more special. Try these fitness-fun ideas together.

■ **Play tree tag.** You'll need streamers of different colors, such as yellow, blue, and red. Tie a streamer around each of several trees that are fairly close together. Choose a color, such as red, and stand next to a tree with a red streamer. Say another color, such as "Blue!" You and your child run to the tree with a blue streamer around it. Ask your child to shout another color— "Yellow!" Run to a tree with a yellow streamer. Continue taking turns naming a color and running to the appropriate tree each time until you both are ready to stop.

■ **Do jumping jacks outside.** Jumping jacks are a great exercise for improving your child's coordination. You don't have to worry about low ceilings or disturbing the neighbors downstairs — because you're doing your jumping jacks outside! Bring along a cassette recorder with lively music to listen to as you exercise. Or invite your child to help you count one-two/three-four/five-six, and so on. Before you start, ask your child to predict how high the number will go before you decide to stop. Be sure to quit before either of you gets overtired.

■ **Take walks together in every season.** For a quieter form of exercise, take walks with your child. Winter, spring, summer, or fall, there's always something interesting that you and your child can discover. Look for human and animal tracks in the snow; search for signs of spring in new flowers and buds on trees; spy interesting shadows on a sunny summer day; gather colorful leaves and acorns on a crisp autumn afternoon.

FITNESS TIPS

- Wear comfortable clothing and footwear when you exercise.
- Do simple stretches to loosen up the muscles before exercising.
- Don't overdo it! Stop when you or your child gets tired.
- Take deep breaths and cool down after you exercise.
- Drink plenty of liquids after you exercise, to replace water that your body loses when you sweat.

Household Chores Can Be Exercise, Too

Physical activity doesn't have to mean running, biking, or swimming. Many household jobs help to build strong bodies, too. Invite your child to help with the following activities. Be sure to supervise carefully:

- Raking leaves
- Shoveling snow
- Weeding the garden
- Harvesting the garden
- Vacuuming and sweeping
- Dusting furniture
- Washing windows inside

Let your child suggest ideas, too!

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Keep A Healthy Weight

Kids need calories to grow and develop. Too many calories, too little activity, or both may be the reasons we gain weight. Below are some simple tips to help you keep your weight healthy. Use this code to find the missing words.

CODE 1=L, 2=E, 3=S, 4=O, 5=W, 6=Y, 7=A, 8=K, 9=I, 10=P, 11=C, 12=T, 13=V

1. Remember: calories come from most all the food and drink you _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____.
3 5 7 1 1 4 5

2. Use _____ _____ _____ _____ fats, oils, and sweets.
1 2 3 3

3. Eat _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ . This will help you feel full without overeating.
3 1 4 5 1 6

4. Don't _____ _____ _____ _____ meals.
3 8 9 10

5. Include lean or low fat foods from _____ _____ _____the food groups: fruits; vegetables; breads and cereals; meat, poultry, fish; milk and milk products.
7 1 1

6. Be more _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____.
7 11 12 9 13 2

See page 17 for answers

Sensory Fun With Food

These activities will help you and your child use the senses to discover new foods and to look at familiar foods in new ways.

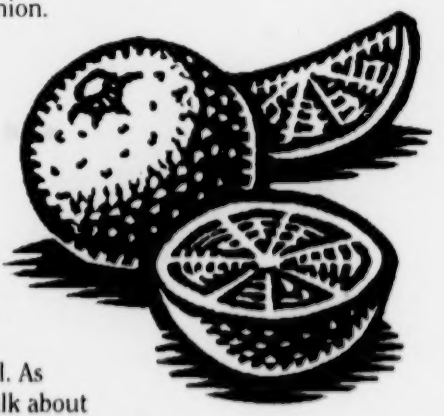
Colorful Fruits and Vegetables

■ **Help your child try different types** of fruits and vegetables by focusing on their colors. The next time you and your child are at the supermarket, spend a few minutes in the produce department. Talk about the colors you notice — the vegetables in dark green, light green, deep yellow, red, and white; and the fruits of yellow, red, green, blue, and orange. Every now and then, plan a different-color fruit and vegetable day. On Red Day, eat strawberries, cherries, watermelon, tomatoes, radishes, and beets. On Yellow Day, eat bananas, peaches, corn, and yellow squash. On Blue Day, eat blueberries and eggplant. Follow with Green Day, Orange Day, and others you and your child agree on.

The Nose Knows!

Good smells are an enjoyable part of eating. Invite your child to use the sense of smell to try to recognize some common foods.

■ **Gather an assortment of foods** with distinctive odors, such as banana, cinnamon, chocolate, lemon, orange, onion, and peanut butter. Dust a cotton ball with the cinnamon. Peel the fruits and onion. Then place a small amount of each food in individual dishes. Keep the foods out of your child's sight, so there will be a surprise.



■ **Blindfold your child and other family members** who want to play along, then bring out the foods. Give each a turn at trying to recognize the foods just by smell. As necessary, let them taste, too. Talk about which foods were easiest to recognize by smell.

Before and After

■ **When you're cooking with different foods,** give your child a sample to feel and smell, if it's safe to do so. For example, give your child some dry rice, cornmeal, flour, or rolled oats to feel as you use it in a recipe. Offer a taste of cheese, fruit, or a vegetable that can be eaten raw. By doing this, you help your child make comparisons between the uncooked food and the cooked result, seeing how texture, smell, color, taste, and even the sound a food makes can change during cooking.

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The Wonderful World of Food

Help your child explore ways that certain foods are the same and different all over the world. Your child can learn about the wonderful world of food with these activities your whole family will enjoy.

Try Foods From Other Lands

■ **Add dishes to your family's meals** that are typical of other cultures. For example, make a Chinese stir-fried dish of meat and vegetables to serve with rice. Another night, make a Middle Eastern couscous — a stew of meat and vegetables spooned over grains of couscous. Try an Indian dish of chicken flavored with yogurt and such spices as coriander, cumin, and ginger. You'll find recipes for these dishes in ethnic cookbooks and in many general cookbooks, too.

■ **As you try foods from other cultures,** help your child compare similarities and differences in the ingredients and how they are cooked and taste. Be prepared for your child not to like everything. Remember, the goal is just to introduce your child to foods of other cultures.

■ **If you're not comfortable** doing the cooking yourself, plan an occasional family meal at the different ethnic restaurants in your area.

Make a French Favorite — Stone Soup

The classic tale *Stone Soup* is the long-ago story of three French soldiers who outsmart a village of people and make a delicious soup in the process. Variations on vegetable soup are found in the foods of many cultures, but there's nothing quite like this French "stone soup"! Read the story with your child, then make your own stone soup! This creative recipe uses ingredients from all five food groups, plus one or two well-washed stones.

■ **Review safety procedures** with your child before you begin. Heat the water or stock and stones while your child helps to wash the vegetables. Let your child use a plastic knife or butter knife to help chop the vegetables. Add all the ingredients to the water or stock, then simmer until tender. Remove the stones before serving the soup. Enjoy it with bread and apple juice or cider, like the people in the story.

Explore Your Own Food Heritage

Do you have recipes that have been passed down from older family members? Together with your child, research your own family food heritage.

■ **Compile favorite family recipes** into a notebook or food journal and let your child illustrate the pages. (Blank books for creating food journals are available in many bookstores.) You might also invite your child to help you prepare a simple dish that's part of your family's food heritage to share at school.

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Rainy Day Food Fun

When it's a drizzly day and you and your child are looking for something to do, try these imaginative activities. Together, read this delightful poem about food called, "I Wonder ..." Then enjoy talking about and sampling foods for a healthy diet.

Make Up a Yummy Animal Alphabet

■ **Read the rhyme aloud,** and invite your child to join in and say it with you. Pick out all the foods in the rhyme: cantaloupe, prunes, carrot juice, cashews, macaroons. Let your child tell you what each food is, and help out as needed. For example, cantaloupe is a type of melon; prunes are a kind of dried fruit.

■ **If you have any of these foods on hand** at home, sample them together. Or, the next time you go to the supermarket, purchase as many as you can or point them out to your child. Cantaloupe, carrot juice and prunes are full of vitamins, and cashews are a source of protein. Macaroons should be eaten only once in a while and in small amounts.

I Wonder . . .

I wonder if an antelope
Would ever taste a cantaloupe.
Or if a small raccoon
Would ever munch upon a prune.
I wonder if a feathered goose
Would try a bit of carrot juice.
Or if a little cockatoo
Would nibble on a small cashew.
Would they choose something new?
I would. Would you?
I would try cantaloupe,
Cashews, or prunes.
I would try carrot juice,
Or even macaroons.
I wonder . . .
Would a kangaroo ever
Choose a food that's new?
I would! Wouldn't you?

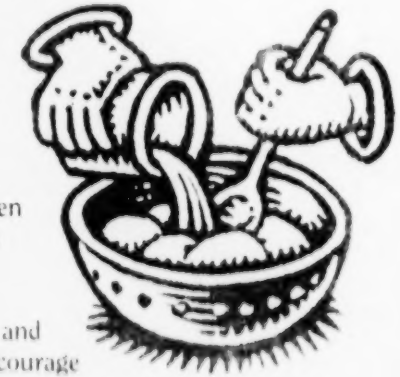
by Marilee Robin Burton

Bananas for the Birds

■ **Here's an ABC game** to help your child think about choosing new foods for other animals. Name an animal and challenge your child to choose a food that starts with the same letter or sound. For example: Alligator — Avocado, Bird —Banana, Cat — Couscous, Rhinoceros — Rice, Snake — Sausage, and so on, through the alphabet. Naturally, you don't have to include every letter, and it's okay if your child makes a mistake in matching the letters. What's important is to focus on different kinds of foods. Write down the animal and food as your child names them. When you've gone through as many letters of the alphabet as you can, reread the list of foods to your child. Then ask: "Which foods would you choose to eat?" Let your child respond, and try to incorporate some of those foods into your meals.

Create a Snack Together

■ **With your child,** look through your cupboard and refrigerator for fruits, vegetables, grain products, and other nutritious foods that you can try in new combinations as snacks. For example, cut up different fruits, arrange them on toothpicks, and then serve them with a dip made of plain yogurt mixed with honey and cinnamon. Or spread whole-grain crackers with low-fat cream cheese, and sprinkle shredded carrot on top. Encourage your child to suggest ideas, and invite other family members to add their creativity.



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Answers

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1. cereal, bread, pasta
2. cherries, pineapple, pear
3. lettuce, potato, carrot
4. grain group

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Bread Group – bread, cereal, cereal, rice, pasta
Vegetable Group – vegetables, juice
Fruit Group – apple, banana, orange, fruit, fruit
Milk Group – yogurt, cheese
Meat Group – poultry, fish, beans, peanut butter

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1. Spinach – vegetable group
2. Lowfat ice cream – milk group
3. Tomatoes – vegetable group
4. Poultry – meat group
5. Milk – milk group
6. Pancakes – bread group
7. Pineapple – fruit group
8. Cherries – fruit group

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B	F	S	E	S	E	N	U	R	P
R	C	Q	L	S	R	P	E	A	R
O	H	U	P	B	A	N	A	N	A
C	P	A	P	Y	R	E	L	E	C
C	S	S	A	Y	A	M	S	T	E
O	A	H	E	G	N	A	R	O	K
L	E	C	A	R	R	O	T	S	I
I	P	G	R	A	P	E	S	K	W
B	E	G	G	P	L	A	N	T	I

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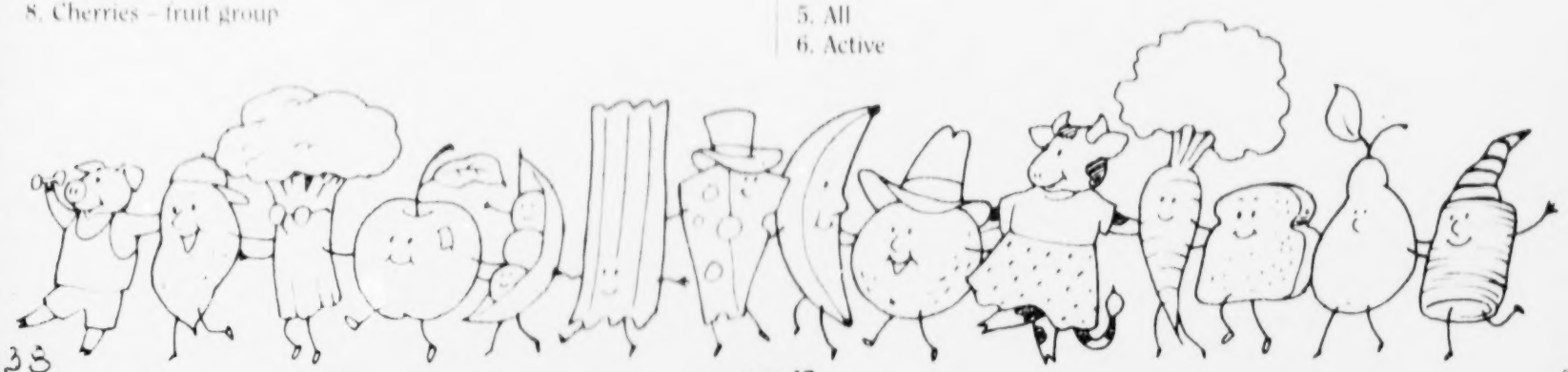
1. Swallow
2. Less
3. Slowly
4. Skip
5. All
6. Active



FUN TIPS

Using the Dietary Guidelines at Home

The Dietary Guidelines can help children select foods to grow, be healthy, and do well in school. Here are 10 ideas to help you follow the dietary guidelines and get lots of exercise.

1 Fuel Up on Fruit
Eat a fruit for a snack or with a meal. Try orange smiles (slices), a fruit kabob, or 100% fruit juice.

2 Vary Your Vegetables
Bite on beans and broccoli; crunch on carrots, corn and cauliflower.

3 Grab Grains
Devour spaghetti, rice, cereal, or other grains for power.

4 Blast Off with Breakfast
It doesn't have to be boring — feast on leftovers, peanut butter and bananas on toast — Use your imagination!

5 Move Your Muscles
Be more active every day. Climb stairs, walk to school, play your air guitar!

6 Find the Fat
Check out the food label to help you pick foods lower in fat.

7 Snack Smart
Try a milk smoothie — blend lowfat milk or plain yogurt with fruit or juice — that's Smart Yet Satisfying!

8 Pick from the Pyramid
Total up your numbers of servings from the 5 major food groups from the Food Guide Pyramid.

9 Try New Tastes
Have a new food each day. Try a new vegetable like jicama; taste yogurt, pita bread, dried apricots, turkey sausage...

10 Map Out Lowfat Meat Meals
Pick out a new recipe using lean pork or beef, tofu, beans or chicken; add foods to the shopping list, or help cook.

These materials were produced for use in conjunction with programs under the National School Lunch Act and Child Nutrition Act.

For more information, or to order more Team Nutrition activity booklets, please write to Team Nutrition, USDA Food & Consumer Service, 3101 Park Center Drive, Room 802, Alexandria, VA 22302.

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Food and Consumer Service

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